



Village Talks

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CITY OF WORTHINGTON

Fall 2015 Issue

Issue 38

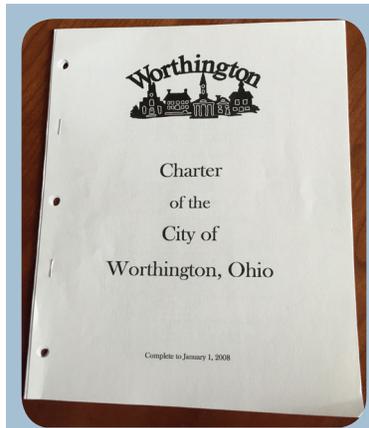
Worthington's Zoning Laws - What you Need to Know

On November 3, 2015, Worthington voters will decide on a proposed change to the City's Charter regarding zoning laws. The City of Worthington wants to make residents aware of the facts surrounding this issue.

The proposed change to the City Charter was submitted by petition to the City by a citizens group wishing to lengthen the number of days from 20 to 60 before a change in the City zoning code or re-zoning of a property goes into effect.

The official ballot language for the proposed Charter amendment reads:

Shall the proposed charter amendment to enact Section 1.04, as set forth in the initiative petition by the citizens of the City of Worthington, to provide that the power of referendum may be exercised during the 60 days after the publication of the adoption of an ordinance or other measure amending the zoning code or changing the zoning of property; and to require that such ordinances and measures shall not take effect until 60 days after publication and to preclude the passage of such ordinances or other measures by emergency, be adopted? Yes or No



The City Charter is the equivalent of Worthington's local constitution. It provides the framework for how the city is organized and governed.

If approved, the amendment would:

1. Provide for a 60-day waiting period from the date of publication for all ordinances that:
 - a. Amend the City's zoning code
 - b. Change the zoning for any property within the City.
2. Prohibit either of those two types of ordinances from being passed on an emergency basis.

If not approved:

The 20-day waiting period currently provided for in the City Charter remains. This 20-day waiting period has been included in the Charter since its inception in 1956. All other central Ohio communities require a 30-day waiting period.

What would a change mean?

- The amendment would increase the waiting-period from 20 to 60 days for all rezoning applications for both large and small-scale developments.

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Political Sign Regulations

With the election season upon us, the City of Worthington is reminding residents of the regulations relating to the placement of political signs in the City of Worthington. Worthington Ordinances require that political signs be placed on private property outside of the public right-of-way. In typical neighborhoods, the right-of-way line is located one (1) foot behind the public sidewalk. In non-typical locations the right-of-way line can be identified on the Worthington GIS mapping system accessed through the City of Worthington website at worthington.org.

City zoning enforcement staff will be making regular surveys during the election season. If signs are found in the right-of-way that appear to be related to a residential

property, the sign will be relocated on to the property out of the right-of-way with a message attached. If signs are found in the right-of-way that are not related to a residential property or are in front of public property, the signs will be removed. Removed signs will be stored at the Department of Planning & Building, 374 Highland Avenue and will be available for pickup during business hours, 7:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday.

City Ordinance requires political signs be removed entirely within one week after the general or special election. For more information, please contact the Department of Planning & Building at (614) 431-2424.

Issue 38, Cont...

- The amendment would increase the waiting-period from 20 to 60 days for all changes made to the Planning and Zoning Code. The Planning and Zoning Code includes regulations about the following:
 - Street standards
 - Flood plain management
 - Sign requirements, including business name signs on buildings and directional signs
 - Residential property requirements related to such items as recreational and camping equipment, swimming pools, parking, and location of air conditioning units or generators
 - Requirements for submission of applications to the Municipal Planning Commission, Architectural Review Board and the Board of Zoning Appeals
 - Bonds for public improvements
 - Storm water management
 - Council variances
 - Land use definitions, procedures for plan submissions
 - Wireless communication systems
 - Control of bamboo
 - Etc.
- The amendment would apply to any ordinance passed that would change any section of the City's Planning and Zoning Code.
- The amendment with the extended timeframe would apply to all items that fall within these categories. Whether a change enjoys broad public support or is controversial and has opposition, all changes in the items above would be subject to an extended waiting period.

What happens during the waiting period?

The waiting period commences after the City Council has approved an Ordinance related to these topics. During this time, residents can circulate a petition to send the issue to a vote of the public regarding whether to uphold or overturn the City Council decision. The issue is on hold during the waiting period with no opportunity for change. If there is no valid petition during this time period, then the City Council decision takes effect at the conclusion of the waiting period. If there is a valid petition filed, then the matter is on hold until the next general election.

During this waiting period, the property owner is not able to move forward with plans to receive a building permit, begin construction activities, or receive Certificates of Occupancy and Compliance.

How does this apply to the ability for City Council to pass legislation on an emergency basis?

- Emergency legislation is authorized by the City Charter in cases where it is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health, safety and welfare of the Municipality.
- The reason for the emergency needs to be stated in the body of the ordinance.
- In order for legislation to be passed as an emergency, it must receive affirmative votes by six of the seven City Council members.
- Traditionally, Worthington passes emergency legislation very sparingly and only when truly necessary.
- The Worthington City Law Director has advised that an ordinance to rezone land should not be passed on an emergency basis, as there is no reason why the immediate preservation of the public health, safety and welfare would be in jeopardy from the passing of a rezoning ordinance.
- The amendment would prohibit emergency passage of changes to the Planning and Zoning Code, including those sections that do not relate to the rezoning of property and have the stated purpose of the protection of human life and health.

At its September 8, 2015 meeting, Worthington City Council approved a motion to oppose the ballot initiative to change the City Charter.

Council members cited the following reasons for this decision:

- The Charter Review Commission will be working next year to examine the existing Charter language and it could determine a change from 20 to 30 days is warranted, which is in alignment with all other communities in central Ohio.
- Moving beyond 30 days to a 60-day waiting period could be harmful to development in Worthington and threaten our ability to attract jobs and effectively maintain an adequate level of income tax collections to support existing City services.
- The City has worked hard and been successful in developing a business-friendly environment to attract jobs and increase the tax base in a way that is thoughtful and responsible.

As mandated by the City Charter, the City of Worthington plans to convene a Charter Review Committee in 2016. At that time, the Charter Review Committee will evaluate all language contained in the City Charter and determine if recommendations for change are warranted. All meetings are open to the public and recommended changes are brought before the voters for approval.

Mark your Calendar



Trick or Treat

Saturday, October 31st - 6pm - 8pm

Trick or Treat takes place in the City of Worthington on Halloween every year.

Municipal Offices Holiday Hours

City of Worthington municipal offices will be closed:

- November 11th for Veterans Day
- November 26th and 27th in recognition of the Thanksgiving holiday.
- Beginning at Noon on Thursday, December 24th through Friday, December 25th.
- Beginning at Noon on Thursday, December 31st through Friday, January 1st.

Indoor Winter Farmers Market

Every Saturday, November through April, from 9am-Noon at the Shops at Worthington Place. Note: There will be no Farmers Market on November 28th, the Saturday after Thanksgiving.

Holiday Open House and Tree Lighting

Sunday, November 29th
Noon - 5:30 p.m.

Old Worthington Open House 5:30 p.m. - Tree lighting on the southeast corner of the Village Green.



Community Center Hours

- Thanksgiving, 8am to 2pm
- Christmas Eve, 5:30am to Noon
- Christmas Day, CLOSED
- New Years Eve, 5:30am to 4pm
- New Years Day, 8am to 2pm

Holiday Trash Pick up

- Trash collection will not change the week of Veterans Day.
- Trash collection will change to Saturday during the holiday weeks of Thanksgiving (11/28); Christmas (12/26); and New Years (1/2)

Visit www.worthington.org for complete information.

Leaf Collection

Leaf Collection is taking place in the City of Worthington through December 4th. The goal of the Worthington Service & Engineering staff is to provide efficient and effective leaf collection that is convenient for all residents. Each street will receive collection once a week.

To ensure collection, please have your leaves raked to the curb by Monday morning of each scheduled collection week. The City cannot guarantee collection of leaves raked out later in the week.

- All leaves must be raked to the curb - do not place leaves in the street. Leaves in streets cause storm sewers to clog and create traffic hazards.
- Do not include foreign materials, such as brush, twigs or grass clippings. Such material damages the leaf vacuum machine.
- Place leaves well away from obstructions such as trees, signs and fire hydrants, since the pick-up hose cannot reach past these obstructions. Leaves near these obstructions will not be picked up.
- Remove vehicles from the street during collection weeks. The leaf vacuum truck will not be able to pick up any leaves blocked by a parked vehicle.

Residents have two additional leaf disposal options:

- Friday curbside yard waste collection - Residents should place leaves in paper yard bags or in a permanent container with a decal labeled "Yard Waste Only"
- Yard waste drop-off - Residents may bring leaves directly to the Department of Service & Engineering at 380 Highland Ave. Monday through Friday, from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, and on the last Saturday of the month during March through October, from 12:00 noon to 3:00 pm.



Contact Us

LOUIS J.R. GOOREY MUNICIPAL BUILDING
436-3100 – 6550 N. High St.
City Manager's office, City Clerk, Economic
Development, Mayor's Court, Finance,
Personnel, Public Information

LAW DEPARTMENT

436-7429 – 370 Highland Ave.

PARKS & RECREATION

436-2743 – 345 E. Wilson Bridge Rd.
Community Center, recreation programs,
park maintenance, street tree program

GRISWOLD CENTER

842-6320 – 777 High St.
Recreation Programs for 55 and older

SERVICE & ENGINEERING

431-2425 – 380 Highland Ave.
Trash collection, recycling, yard waste, sewers,
maintenance, Capital Improvement Projects

PLANNING & BUILDING

431-2424 – 374 Highland Ave.
Land use planning, zoning and building
regulation

DIVISION OF POLICE

885-4463 – 6555 Worthington Galena Rd.

DIVISION OF FIRE & EMS

885-7640 – 6500 N. High St.
CPR classes, public education, fire inspection

www.worthington.org

www.businessworthington.org

www.facebook.com/worthingtonoh

www.twitter.com/worthingtonohio



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Open Checkbook

Find Worthington's Books Online

The City of Worthington is partnering with Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel to open up a new level of transparency for citizens to learn more about the City's spending. Treasurer Mandel's office recently launched a wave of Franklin County local checkbooks online with the website, **OhioCheckbook.com**. The City of Worthington joined local government leaders from across Ohio for the announcement.

The City of Worthington is one of the first municipalities to participate in this new tool, which allows people to search online to see exactly how the City is spending its tax dollars. "I believe the people of Ohio have a right to know how their tax money is being spent at the state and local level," said Treasurer Mandel. "By partnering and posting local government checkbooks on OhioCheckbook.com, taxpayers across Ohio are empowered with a powerful tool to hold public officials accountable within their communities."

The partnership is a natural fit for the City of Worthington, which has posted its budgets, financial and tax reports online at **worthington.org** for the past several years. "The City of Worthington has always been committed to transparency and open government," said Worthington Finance Director Molly Roberts. "OhioCheckbook.com is a great tool for our citizens to become engaged and learn more about how their tax dollars are spent."

